

SUBJECT: General Conduct	NUMBER: 1-5.02
EFFECTIVE DATE:	REVIEW DATE:
NMMLEPSC STANDARDS: PER.09.01, PER.03.06	APPROVED: Sheriff

I. POLICY

Personnel of the Valencia County Sheriff's Office shall follow a prescribed code of conduct and act responsibly while on and off duty. The sheriff's office shall hold its members accountable for all actions, which may adversely affect the agency. The Law Enforcement Code of Ethics governs professional conduct for all sworn members of the agency. Additionally, specific standards for general conduct have been established for all members of the agency to enhance the integrity and discipline of professional performance. Standards of conduct are identified in the Standard Operating Procedures of the agency and in the Valencia County Personnel Policy manual.

II. RULES AND PROCEDURES

- A. Personnel shall obey the Constitution of the United States and protect rights of the people guaranteed by it.
- B. Personnel shall obey all felony and misdemeanor laws of the United States of America and of any state or local jurisdiction in which they are present.
- C. Personnel shall obey all protective or restraining orders filed against them or filed by the employee against another person. Copies of these orders shall be provided to the Sheriff through the chain of command.
- D. Personnel shall not commit or omit any acts, which constitute a violation of the rules, regulations, directives, or orders of this agency or the County of Valencia.
- E. Personnel shall conduct themselves, both on duty and off duty, in a manner, which reflects positively on the agency and the law enforcement profession.
- F. Conduct unbecoming an deputy or employee shall include, but not be limited to:
 - 1. Any conduct which brings the sheriff's office into disrepute.
 - 2. Any conduct which impairs the operation or efficiency of the agency.
 - 3. The member's arrest and conviction of any felony or serious misdemeanor charge.
- G. Personnel will not give special consideration, privilege, or professional courtesy to members of this or any other agency when those members are involved in a felony or serious misdemeanor crime nor will members solicit any of the above if they are charged

with a felony or serious misdemeanor crime. Personnel who are arrested for any crime shall report the arrest to the Sheriff through the chain of command at the earliest opportunity.

- H. Personnel shall report for duty at the time and place required by assignment or order and shall be physically and mentally fit to perform their duties. Personnel will be properly equipped so that they may immediately assume their assigned duties.
- I. Personnel shall not feign illness or injury, falsely report themselves ill or injured, or otherwise deceive or attempt to deceive any supervisor of the sheriff's office or the County of Valencia, as to the condition of their health.
- J. Personnel shall constantly direct their best efforts to accomplish the functions and goals of the agency efficiently and intelligently.
- K. Personnel shall not engage in any activity or personal business, which may cause them to neglect or be inattentive to their assignment.
- L. Personnel shall maintain sufficient competency to properly and accurately perform their duties and assume responsibility for their positions.
- M. Personnel shall observe common courtesy when using tobacco products when in direct contact with the public, other member of the agency, or other Valencia County personnel. Personnel will not use tobacco products when in an area designated for non-smoking, when in formation, or when they neglect their assignments to do so.
- N. Personnel shall immediately obey all lawful orders of any supervisor or orders given via police radio or telephone. This will include orders relayed from a supervisor by personnel of the same rank or lesser rank.
- O. Insubordination by agency personnel will not be tolerated. Insubordination consists of:
 - 1. Willfully neglecting or deliberately refusing any lawful order given by any supervisor.
 - 2. Being disrespectful in language or conduct, or treating with contempt, any supervisor.
 - 3. Publicly criticizing any supervisor, order, or directive of this agency or the County of Valencia.
- P. Personnel shall not recommend or suggest the procurement of a particular product or the employment of a particular professional service.
- Q. Personnel shall not act officiously or permit personal feelings, prejudices, animosities, or friendships to influence their decisions.
- R. Personnel shall not use coarse, violent, profane, or insolent language or gestures.

- S. Personnel shall not express any prejudice toward race, religion, politics, national origin, life style, or similar personal characteristics.
- T. Personnel shall not criticize or ridicule the agency, its policies, or other personnel in a manner, which is defamatory, obscene, or unlawful, nor shall personnel make statements, which undermine the effectiveness of the agency or interfere with the maintenance of discipline.
- U. Personnel shall obtain information in an official and courteous manner and act on it in a proper and judicious manner within the scope of their duties. Actions of all personnel shall be consistent with established agency procedures whenever any person requests assistance, asks advice, or makes a complaint or report either by phone or in person.
- V. Personnel shall not alter, misrepresent, or otherwise make any false statements on any report or other written document which has been filled out in the course of employment. Written document refers to reports, citations, public records, public vouchers, overtime slips, leave requests, affidavits, or any written instrument completed by agency personnel. A violation of this section may result in prosecution for violations of the New Mexico Statutes dealing with Public Records, Public Money, and Perjury.
- W. All reports and written documentation will be completed and turned in on time in accordance with established procedures.
- X. Personnel shall truthfully answer all questions specifically directed to them and narrowly related to the scope of employment and operation of the agency.
- Y. In an administrative investigation upon order of the Sheriff, or a superior officer conducting an administrative investigation, employees shall truthfully and candidly answer all questions directed to them regarding the investigation.
- Z. In the context of this rule, lack of candor, such as omission of detail to give false impression shall be regarded the same as untruthfulness.
- AA. Personnel shall cooperate fully with investigators in any internal investigation and shall be afforded all rights and protection provided by law, policy, and rules and procedures.
- BB. Except where otherwise authorized, personnel shall not use agency or Valencia County resources for personal gain unless specifically authorized by a supervisor.
- CC. Personnel shall be responsible for the safeguard and proper use of all agency issued property. All authorized equipment shall be utilized only for its intended purpose and shall be maintained in proper working order.
- DD. Personnel shall have a telephone available and shall keep the agency informed as to their current phone number.

- EE. Personnel shall provide residence address and notify the agency immediately of a change in address.
- FF. Personnel shall carry their identification cards and badges on their person while on duty or armed, except when impractical or dangerous to their safety or to an investigation.
- GG. Personnel shall not lend to another person their identification card or badge or permit them to be photographed or reproduced without approval of the Sheriff.
- HH. Personnel shall not authorize the use of their names, photographs, or official titles in connection with testimonials or advertisements of any commodity or commercial enterprise without approval of the Sheriff.
- II. Personnel shall not present themselves as the official representative of the sheriff's office without prior authorization.
- JJ. Personnel shall avoid regular or continuous dealings or association with persons who are felons, persons whom they know are under active criminal investigations, persons who are incarcerated or persons who have a reputation in the community or sheriff's office for present involvement in felonious or criminal behavior except as necessary in the performance of official duties or where unavoidable due to close family relationship.
- KK. Personnel shall treat all official business of the sheriff's office as confidential. Information regarding official business shall be disseminated only to those for whom it is intended in accordance with established procedure.
- LL. Personnel shall not knowingly interfere with any criminal or administrative investigation, assigned task, or duty assignment of another and shall not directly or indirectly, by threat, bribe, or coercion, attempt to secure the withdrawal or abandonment of a complaint or charge.
- MM. Deputies shall possess a valid New Mexico driver's license and shall carry it at all times when driving. Deputies shall notify the Sheriff of all charges or convictions of traffic violations, while on or off duty, and any suspensions or revocations of their license.
- NN. Personnel will not engage in any form of political activity while on duty.
- OO. Personnel shall give their name and duty assignment to any person requesting it during duty hours, or when acting under the scope of authority or position unless doing so would jeopardize their safety or an ongoing investigation.
- PP. Sworn personnel will protect one another in time of danger, stress and under circumstances where danger might reasonably be expected.
- QQ. Personnel shall not possess alcoholic beverages in any law enforcement facility or vehicle except in the actual performance of official duties.

- RR. Personnel shall not consume any intoxicating beverage while on duty or utilizing agency property except in the actual performance of official duties. Personnel shall not use intoxicating beverages to the extent that it renders them unable to report for their next scheduled tour of duty or discredits the sheriff's office as a whole.
- SS. Personnel shall notify their supervisor if a prescription requires on duty use of any controlled substance. Personnel must provide a physician's statement indicating the medication will not impair driving or judgment abilities.
- TT. Personnel shall not bring or store controlled substances, narcotics, or hallucinogens in any law enforcement facility or vehicle except in the actual performance of official duties or when so prescribed by a licensed physician.
- UU. Personnel will only take meals and breaks as authorized or scheduled. Personnel are subject to call during meals or breaks and will advise communications of location at all times.
- VV. General health and physical fitness is a voluntary requirement. Fitness and health affects emotions, cognitive, behavior, and interpersonal well-being. It is recommended that deputies maintain a regular fitness program and a healthy diet. The Employee Assistance program can assist employees with a healthy lifestyle and recommendations on a fitness program to balance work and life.
- WW. Personnel shall be obligated to report illegal acts or violations of this manual, Valencia County personnel policies, or ethical standards by other members to a supervisor or the Sheriff. The chain of command shall be followed unless the seriousness of the act warrants immediate notification to the highest authority.
- XX. Personnel using personal or agency-owned cell phones, tablets, cameras or other electronic devices to document (photographs, audio recordings, etc.) any agency dealings (i.e. criminal investigation) are not authorized to display or transmit those documents for any reason other than agency business.
- YY. Sheriff's office employees are prohibited from engaging in electronic surveillance, eavesdropping, unauthorized or secret recording by use of an electronic recording device of any communications between employees or elected representatives of the County of Valencia. Nothing shall prohibit the usage of such devices to fulfill work requirements concerning everyday events and tasks that require the recordings to fulfill work duties. In the event that a recording must be made for non-criminal or traffic law purpose(s), it shall be made by a supervisor of higher rank with an agency approved device and in accordance with policy and law.